

The Spiritualist,

AND JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE.

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FOOD, MANNERS AND MORALS.

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I am glad to find that the more thoughtful readers of this journal are beginning to realise the fact that there is a poetic, as well as a gross animal side to human nature. The Life of Christ was a Poem—intense, fragrant and idealistic. Even infidels have been allured into profound spiritual longings in contemplating the idyllic scenes, and domestic purity which made the Bethany experience so beautiful. In my "*Spirituelle* view of Diet," contributed to the *Psychological Review*, I endeavoured to show that overfeeding is not only repulsive to refined natures, but the cause of the admitted coarseness and vulgarity of the age. Perhaps no front rank intellect so completely made earth his heaven, as the poet Shelley. Without the bewildering dance of tables, he was, *par excellence*, the most entrancing Spiritualist of modern times. His days were festivals of music which the over-fed crowd could not hear; and his nights—especially in Italy—a perpetual *séance*. His having an imagination of the first water might be the constitutional cause of this dreamy magnificence and communion with other and better worlds. But it is a physiological and a scientific fact that a well regulated dietary affords the soul a clearness of vision, a mental comfortableness, and a freedom from vulgar earth-bound thoughts, of which the sensual, every-day crowd can form no conception. I am no vegetarian; and I look upon Dr. Tanner—during his experiments—as a useless idiot. Still, I maintain that the smell of the slaughter-house, the wholesale butchery of animals, and the eating at meals by the vulgar until they induce sleep in an over-heated body and an indolent brain, have more to do with the profane language, animal grossness, and decline of domestic morals in the nineteenth century, than casual observers conceive, or than even the responsible religionists care to confess. Now that civilisation has grown defiant of moral restraint, it is fashionable to over-feed, play the animal, and curse the "Beauty of Holiness" by sneers at the Christian Churches. Once upon a time the deer in the forests were

admired for their soft graceful movements, as ornaments of the glades which they haunt. Now they are caressed and encouraged merely as future dinners. Birds share the same fate. The doves must bleed at Hurlingham, or hang head-downwards in the poulterers' shops if they are to attract sympathy. I verily believe that some people would eat their own grandmother, so strong is the love of the smell of blood in the land in this our day. I was—with chivalrous bachelor sentiment—the other day, trying in vain to convert a single lady to my own Shelleyesque views of life and destiny; and approached a Sussex garden sonnet-fashion. The sweet trail of luxuriant pea and bean flowers, and the languid breath of wild wall roses led me into the calm emotional moods of imaginative reflection. The lady was educated; and of course refined. So far the afternoon communion was congenial. But I noticed that the *vegetable* side of the gardens most interested the fair one. Why? Simply because of the potatoes, the carrots, turnips, and other growths which suggested “dinner” later in the day. Small wonder that we have so little “plain living and high thinking,” whilst even the ladies allow heavy meals to absorb their devout attention. Exceptions to this rule are as rare as they are interesting. I know that life is practical, good food a necessity, and that æsthetic culture is chiefly a temperamental gift. But moderation and common sense, in diet, need not become a crotchet. Plain substantial food in variety, is best for health and morals. Could not the Spiritualist ladies unite and lead a reformation in the matter of food? Like myself, they must have noticed the vulgarising effect on the common people of over feeding, and the excessive destruction of animals of docile habits and beauty of build. Although my acquaintance with Spiritualism is chiefly literary, I have read enough of its philosophy to know that its primary sympathies are with all forms of life and happiness. Great eaters were never great thinkers. The holiest men and women of all ages have been those who were conspicuous for simple habits and moderate diet. I might recall the Saints of the Romish Calendar; and such men and women as Wesley; Fletcher, of Madely; Swedenborg; Keble; and the famous religious and literary thinkers of the last generation: men too refined and spiritualised to—

“Slay the lamb that looked them in the face.”

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THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WELSH.

The following narrative, from the *Pall Mall Gazette*, most faithfully describes the characteristics of the native Welsh people in the Southern part of the Principality. The sketch is all the more interesting because, at the present time, the British Association is assembled in one of the chief towns in Wales, but one in which the leading portion of the population is English:—

Crossing the lofty Crumlin Viaduct on a sunny July afternoon, and looking down from our train, we seemed to be face to face with the glad, riotous life of full summer-tide. A winding valley, rich in foliage, sends leafy billows high up the slopes of the rounded hills on either side. Against the more neutral tint of the woods shimmering in the afternoon heat there stands out the bright yellow-green of the newly mown hayfields, and the intense emerald of the mountain domes, whose smooth surface emerges from the woody undulations as the corn out of its rough cup.

In 1875 one of those storms which transform these peaceful hills into furious destroyers swept down a pretty side-dale opening into the valley of the Ebbw. A reservoir lying hidden in this dale, surcharged with the rain, burst its dam, and rushed madly towards the valley. Finding its path intercepted by the canal, which is here banked high, the torrent forced its way through the embankment, liberated the waters of the canal, and made of its momentary opponent an effective ally in its work of annihilation. Standing just below the bank of the canal stood a building which was at one time a small factory and a home for a family of eight. Suddenly, without warning, the raging torrent overwhelmed the house, paying no heed to the cries of its harmless inmates. In the graveyard attached to a chapel a few steps further on, we found the simple record of this disaster. As we read, the sound of a strange chanting voice came from the chapel, and the gravedigger told us that a body just brought up from the adjoining Risca coal-pit was about to be buried. The air was pierced by the loud wailings of women. The Risca Colliery stands well at the entrance of a second valley that here joins the one we have been tracing. It has all the appearance of wonted activity. The smoke that ascends from the lofty stack spreads itself into a thin cloud which glides softly up the mountain side. The engines are working with firm, regular stroke. A fresh batch of men stand at the pit's mouth

ready to descend and continue the work of unearthing the dead. There seems something ghastly in this uninterrupted rise and fall of piston and beam, just above the newly filled tombs. These steady pulsations affect us like the movements of a living creature which survive the destruction of its vital organs. Yet this persistence in its habitual course appears to harmonise with the state of mind of the mining population of the district, which has, we are told, a way of growing accustomed to these decimating shocks. Only a little way below this colliery stands another, where twenty years ago an explosion extinguished 140 lives. Within half-an-hour's walk are the hideous monuments of three explosions which have abruptly effaced more than 500 hardy lives. They can all be seen from one and the same spot. Yet the collier will probably pass them daily, and continue his perilous work with the unreflecting pertinacity of these colliery engines. It must not be supposed, however, that the South Wales miner is unaffected by events of this complexion and magnitude. One might expect that the intensely emotional nature of the Welsh would render them highly impressible to whatever is mysterious and terrible. And we learn on inquiry that at such a moment as the present the mind of the people is shaken with distress and fear. But this anguish appears to lead to no keen scrutiny of the ways of Providence. The Welshman, so far as one can ascertain, is not of a speculative turn of mind; the problem of the mystery of existence does not readily shape itself to his intelligence. This absence of the bold inquiring impulse is intimately connected with the religious habits of the people. The deep superstitious reverence for authority in matters of faith which is so conspicuous a trait of the mining population is but the other side of this intellectual temperament. The Welsh dissenter, it is said, is not only a thorough going bibliolater, but entertains towards his "preacher" a sentiment hardly distinguishable from that of an Irishman for his priest. These spiritual guides appear to be for the most part men of scanty culture. They are drawn from the ranks of the common people, including the miners themselves. At the theological seminary they undergo a certain kind of intellectual discipline, the most conspicuous result of which is a capability of using the English idiom with a fair degree of freedom and accuracy. Even this small intellectual interval between minister and congregation appears a vast one to the people

concerned. The deeply fixed impulse of reverence in the many seems here, as elsewhere, to find its natural correlative in the arrogance of the few. Thus the newly fledged minister, happily unconscious of his youthful crudity and of the real width of his intellectual horizon, poses and is regarded as a divinely constituted authority. And so it happens that when under a calamity like the present one he repeats the commonplaces of his creed, the popular mind at once acquiesces. If there are logical flaws in the teaching, reverence for the teacher renders them invisible. The same indisposition to inquiry, the same brute-like resignation to things as they are, seems to show itself in relation to social and political problems. The fatalism of the Welsh miner betrays itself in his indifference to the urgent industrial questions of the hour. Unlike his brethren in the north, he is said to read little and to reflect less. We hear of no self-created institutes or workmen's clubs providing opportunities for self instruction and intellectual intercourse. The interests of the particular Salem or Bethel to which the miner has attached himself prove a sufficient field for the exercise of such public spirit as he possesses. The public-house, it is true, is as much a necessary institution in the collier's life as the chapel; yet it does not seem to be here, as it is in some places, a centre of political ideas. Hence, though the people may get up an amount of enthusiasm on a point of Sabbath observance, they are not the force which underlies the agitation of such questions as an increased liability of employers. Beyond the local paper which generously provides the strong stimulus of sensational police news and prurient gossip, the people appear to content themselves with that sort of intellectual pabulum which is furnished by the more democratic kind of popular weeklies from London. Yet while thus for the most part inert, they are capable of being roused to a pitch of fury, if only their deeper emotions are touched, and the contagion of sympathy is spread by a skilful leader. Their servile obedience to a loud commanding voice has led them into danger more than once. Standing by the mouth of the Risca Colliery, and watching the stolid faces of the men as they descend, we cannot help wondering whether anything of the defiant spirit of the Chartists, who had one of their strongholds in the neighbourhood, lurks beneath this appearance of stupid submission. If the iconoclastic ideas which reach them through some of their favourite newspapers should take a firm hold

on their minds, and if their heavy-jawed, wide-mouthed preachers should choose to head a crusade against the privileges of rank and enormous fortunes, might there not be some ugly consequences? Meanwhile it is plain that these Monmouthshire miners mean to go uncomplainingly on their road. Perhaps they do so all the more readily because life has never presented itself to them as a thing to be made very joyous or beautiful. The race to which they belong seems tinged with an ineradicable melancholy, which shows itself as clearly in their riotous excitements that take the place of amusements as in their somewhat dismal religious observances. The daily eight hours' incarceration of the miner in the sunless and cheerless chambers of the pit naturally adds to this natural incapacity for light-hearted enjoyment. And so we find that the only way of spending a holiday which suggests itself to the collier mind is a carouse, whether in the milder form of a tea meeting in the chapel or in the stronger or more familiar form. During the summer the hill population pour down by the converging valley railways to Newport, crossing the Bristol Channel perhaps, and alarming with their noisy ways the respectable idlers at Weston-super-Mare or Ilfracombe. The one form of pure enjoyment which they seem to understand is music. Yet their very music seems to a stranger's ear to reflect a gloomy tinge of sentiment.

AN HONEST CONJUROR.

Conjurors of the first order must be men of very keen apprehension, and of more than ordinary quickness, foresight and judgment. Therefore is their *honest* evidence of more than usual importance; as in the case, for instance, of Professor Jacobs, the *facile princeps* of prestidigitation in France, as M. Bellachini is in Germany. Both these gentlemen have given their adhesion to the fact that Spiritualism is above their art.

Conjurors of ordinary minds, or minds below par, are subject to more than ordinary temptation to double dealing; living as they do by fiction, fiction indeed being their glory, we are less surprised in this case than in that of others, if deception becomes a habit in ordinary life. It is but one step down the abyss, to pretend that the help they may obtain from spirits is nothing more than evidence of their own skilfulness. Or, knowing that the help they get is from spirits of a very low order, they may be ashamed to confess it. This was not, however, the case

with one great conjuror whom I could name, who was so honest as to acknowledge that some of what gained him such crowded audiences, was the magic by which he gave orders to "infernal spirits to obey."

There are, however, conjurors equally honest who freely confess that they are aided by spirits of, I believe, a different calibre; and these do not profess to order them. Indeed it is only very inferior spirits, from whom no moral good could possibly be expected, who are subject to man's orders, or who will submit to be controlled by him. One of these honest conjurors I once saw in the South of France, who attributed much of his success to the assistance he received from the spirit of his grandfather.

There is a widely known prestidigitator often in England, who notoriously calls spirits to his aid, but he does not call evil spirits or low spirits, so he does not pretend to command them. And for this very honesty he does not, I opine, obtain the full patronage that the very striking performances in his presence should elicit. And strange to say, he seems especially avoided by what are called "Spiritual persons," as well as by those over whom the latter have influence. And now we have the talented Professor Jacobs candidly confessing himself a Spiritualist *in toto* in a letter which I have translated from the *Revue Spirite* of June last:—

"*Letter to the Scientific Society for Psychological Studies, at Paris.*

"Gentlemen, after the appreciative reports which have reached me in regard to the prestidigitation that I had the honour of executing in your presence on the 31st of March last, at the Hotel Cochet, and also on Tuesday last, at the rooms of your own society, I feel it is but right that I should give some explanation.

"I was present on those two occasions for two reasons: First, because I have now for a very long time held the Spiritualist doctrine; and to gain conviction, I did not find it necessary to put my finger on the wound, as did Saint Thomas; I had never seen a planchette or a table move; I did not understand what a medium was! The plurality of existences of the being was verbally explained to me, and this fundamental verity of Spiritualism proved sufficient to convince me. I am your brother in belief.

"The second reason why I gave these two specimens of my powers as a conjuror, with great good-will is this:

"The vast number and diversity of the phenomena obtained not only abroad but in France, have given cause for many objections.

"In the opposite camp they are by no means particular in what they say of us, and they spare neither terms, the reverse of flattering, nor sarcasm in speaking of us: this you know; manifestations the most unquestionable are powerless to convince sceptics.

"There may be many reasons for this:

"Either the time has not yet come, or the experiments leave something to be desired in their presentations. Or they are capable of imitation. Or, in fine, and this case is of frequent occurrence, many persons say that they are incredulous although they are at the bottom believers, because they dare not, or they cannot avow themselves to be Spiritualists.

"They treated the brothers Davenport as impostors.

"Robin, (a celebrated conjuror) at the rooms of the *Boulevard du Temple* threw dirt upon them by coarsely imitating them, and the doubting public, not being able to establish a comparison, went home convinced that the two brothers were nothing but skilful conjurors. The public said so, and we must put the public at its value. Did it not say the same of Home? Will it not, in all probability, say the same of any future mediums who may come amongst us! It must be plain to all, that, however the case may be, the qualities of the conjuror are, according to public opinion, too frequently confounded with those of the medium, spite of Crookes, spite of Slade! Well then, you ask me whether it is not useful for the Scientific Society, for Psychological Studies to be in intimate relation with a man of perspicacity who is a fervent spiritualist; with one who would be able to serve as a Touchstone, if I may so express myself, to the opinions diversely spread abroad. Knowing all the ramifications of prestidigitation, should I not be able to unravel the true from the false, and that in the presence of you all? Should I not be the very man to confirm this thing, and to reject the other?—Yes, I am able by my art to imitate many of the phenomena peculiar to mesmerism or to Spiritualism, such as occult transmission of thought, physical insensibility, suspension of the body in space, reproductions or spontaneous appearances of writing, etc., etc.; but, I repeat it, all these effects are nothing but clever conjuring tricks that have nothing in common with Spiritualism.

"I am no medium for manifestations.

"If you think that the idea which I put before you is useful for the movement, I place myself entirely in your hands.

"M. de Mirville, before publishing his work, *Concerning Spirits and their Fluidic Manifestations*, was not above founding his argument on a written affirmation of Robert Houdin (a noted conjuror), who, at that period, did (*faisait*) the double view with his son. What Houdin said was this: 'The lawyer who would gain his cause must not reject any detail.' Although the cause of Spiritualism may be already established, in spite of its numerous detractors, it is not less our duty to spread the light. We have on our side truth based on science and reason; we are able to speak out, and we ought to do so. Jestings touches us not. We are upright apostles, and all honest means may and ought to be put in practice to open the eyes of those poor blind creatures who see nothing on their side of their swaddling clothes, nothing on the other side of their winding sheet. "JACOBS."

April 27th, 1880

If only by his letter, I think Spiritualists must see that Professor Jacobs is not a man who does things by halves; that his judgment is valuable; and that such a character must be a gain to the cause. SCRUTATOR.

PRISONERS.

"I can't get out," said the starling.—*Stern*.

Myra sat mutt'ring by her door,

Peeling potatoes. On the floor

The peel lay scattered.

A starling, moping in his cage,

Had been lamenting all the morn,

While Myra wept in grief and rage;

A new wrong had that day been borne,

And hope was shattered.

And as she wailed and peeled away,

She heard th' imprisoned starling say,

"I can't get out."

"That's true," she answered, "thou poor bird!

A bird that's caught is caged for life!

Thou never saidst a truer word.

Thy plaints, like mine, must needs be rife,

Without a doubt!"

Still as she ply'd her useful task,

Her little Susan stayed to ask,

(Blowing a bubble)

"Why do the tears run down your cheek?

Why, mother, look so pale and sad?

Why do you to the starling speak?"

The curious child no answer had

But, "Do not trouble!"

"Bubbles, like early days, are bright,
But soon are gone, like light by night,
Like liberty!
Bubbles are beauteous when they soar,
Free flights, like free birds' flights, they take;
And the more lovely, then the more
Regretted are they when they break
And go for aye."

Myra again addressed the bird,
And to her children not a word.

'Twas all about

"The ills of caged life; broken vows.
With such a lot, what grace to die!"
She joyed his sympathy to rouse,
For all he could he did reply,
"I can't get out!"

W. R. T.

A SEANCE IN THE LIGHT.

BY T. I. NICHOLS, M.D.

The manifestations I am about to describe took place in the light, and have, I believe, some novel features.

Mr. Eglinton, the medium, Mrs. Nichols and I were in our *séance* room last night, when "Joey" came in the dark, and after polite salutations, proposed to try some new experiments. "Doctor," he said, "will you please to get a jug of water, a fine steel pen, and a small bottle of black ink?"

I lighted the gas and brought the articles required. Mr. Eglinton laid upon the table two common school slates and some blank cards. Then he filled a small porcelain vase with water, set it on a table in a corner of the room and covered it with one of the slates. Returning to us he said, "Request that something be brought and put in the vase." We desired that it might be a flower. In a moment he said, "Doctor, take the cover off the vase." I went and raised it and took out of the water an aster so large that it nearly filled the vase.

Then he filled a tumbler with water, and with Mrs. Nichols, held it under the table firmly pressed up against it. "Ask for something to be put in it," he said. "More flowers" were asked for, and in a moment the tumbler was raised, and in it were two sprays of flowers. All this was in a very good light.

Mr. Eglinton then took up one of the cards, between three and four inches square, showed us both sides, and threw it into a corner of the room, where it lay in full sight on the floor, then instantly seized a lead pencil and threw it after the card. In the same moment,

he said, "Doctor get the card!" I sprang and seized it. One side was covered with writing with a pencil, which I copy:—

"That we can write when we have the conditions we have already shown you. Mrs. Nichols is to be prepared for an outburst of manifestation through her powers."

The time between the throwing of the blank card and pencil into the corner of the room, and my picking up the card with this inscription, did not exceed five seconds.

Another card was then taken, carefully examined, and a corner torn off, which I put into my pocket. The card was then laid upon a slate and with it a clean new steel pen. These were covered with another slate, the inkstand placed on the covering slate and our six hands held the slates firmly together upon the table for about twenty seconds. Then the inkstand was taken up, the two slates turned over together, the inkstand placed upon them, and held firmly as before a few moments longer. Raps on the table announced that the experiment was ended. I removed the inkstand and the upper slate, and found the pen wet with ink, and the card written upon on both sides, and in two widely different kinds of writing. First in a most delicate and beautiful hand, like the finest plate engraving was the following:—

"Lord, who shall dwell in thy Tabernacle, or who shall rest in thy holy hill?"

"Qui ingreditur sine macula, et operatur justitiam:"

"Qui loquitur veritatem in corde suo, qui non egit dolum in lingua sua:"

"Nec fecit proximo suo malum, et opprobrium non accepit adversus proximos suos, etc., etc."

"The Lord's Tabernacle is, at this present, in this room. Evil, corruption, vice, nor wickedness cannot get entrance. Why? Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall inherit the Kingdom of Heaven."

Then in characters three times as large, in a quite different, but strong, characteristic hand, was written:—

"Thus unseen to you we can write without apparently using the ordinary materials. Utilising our power we can dematerialise the ink, and building up its composite particles in the interior, create this message in opposition to the 'known laws of nature.' It may be possible to explain our modus operandi when there is a necessity for so doing."

So much was written on one side of the card. On the other (presumably after the slates had been turned over) was written:—

The mother of Arthur Hildreth is present and has endeavoured to write some communication to you but failed in power. J. Ferguson† comes with her. I send my love. Will this suffice for some? "*

Then in small delicate hand in which the first part was written, are the two words:

"Dominus Vobiscum."

and a Latin cross "†"

At a signal we turned down the light. "Ernest" spoke to us a few sentences in his deep strong voice, and "Joey" took kindly leave of us.

I may remark that in a good light everything was done exactly as I have described. How a steel pen could write on a card between two slates held firmly together on the table, with the inkstand on the upper slate, I am not able to explain—I only know that it was done. The pen put dry between the slates was wet with ink when I took it out. The stains are yet on my hand where I wiped it when I took it up, and read the card. I do not know why a portion of the writing should be in Latin, but we have had at other *séances* Greek and French. I must also say that after a careful watch of three years I have never seen the slightest reason to doubt the absolute good faith and honesty of Mr. William Eglinton.

23, Fopstone Road, Earl's Court, London, S.W.
August 24th, 1880.

A CLAIRVOYANT BRAHMIN.

BY OTTO VON TEULSDROCH.

When I was considerably younger than I am at present, it was my fortune to be residing at Tortuska, in Japan, and while there to make the acquaintance of a Brahmin, who, for some unexplained reason, had lost caste, and consequently had absented himself from his fatherland. Of this worshipper of Brahm (not "Brahma," as I have seen it printed in English volumes), I learned many strange things and saw many strange deeds. He was a man whose soul seemed to lie in his intellect. Amongst the many ideas, which I cannot do otherwise than term "hallucinations," indulged in by this extraordinary being, was one that I think might be interesting to your readers. It was that by the aid of science—a science which begins where conjecture ends—the human body may be sustained for an indefinite period, may indeed live on for ages in communion

with those beings benignant and malignant who inhabit what is misnamed space.

This mighty intellect (and of its mightiness there could be no doubt, however absurd some of its reasoning might appear), had so firm a belief in the possibility of attaining this consummation that it was easy to be almost led to give credence to the fact. This Brahmin follower of Paracelsus, the prototype of Frankenstein, with the true philosophy which seeks to solve instead of to deny what it cannot comprehend, sought with untiring zeal the goal upon which his hopes were centred, with what eventual effect I know not. But this I can vouch for: he obtained so great a knowledge of Nature's laws, and more especially of the unseen who as our immortal Goethe hath it.

*"In der Welt weit,
Aus der Einsamkeit,
Wollen sie Dich locken."*

that he was enabled to tell me fifty days before I should in ordinary course have heard it, of the death of an uncle of mine at Lisbon, and of the necessity for my departure for that city. My reason for troubling you with this is:—

I. That perhaps some of your readers may have held converse with this same priest through a medium, as he must long ere this have joined the shades. His name was Ahjka.

II. That I should like the opinion of anyone of your correspondents who may feel inclined to give it, on the possibility of that which in the year 1847 I was almost inclined to accept as a probability, viz.:—The existence of the human body with full use of all its faculties for an indefinite period.

I think it was Iamblichus who said, "The laws of nature cannot be contradicted; but are we certain that we understand *all* nature's laws?"

21, Fawcett Road, South Bermondsey, August 27th, 1880.

THE PEASANT GIRL OF BOIS D'HAINÉ.

BY ERNEST WILDING.

Much has been said of, and concerning, Louise Lateau, but a marvellous subject cannot be exhausted; like a thing of beauty 'it will never pass into nothingness.' We live in an age of wonders—commonly called supernatural—though anything supernatural cannot exist or happen; and so familiar have we grown with marvellous effects that we flippantly slight their causes. If this is an age of wonders, it is moreover an age of flippancy, and what we do not in the least comprehend we laugh at lightly. There is some wisdom in acting after this fashion; for in a short time we get the world to believe—and have not much difficulty

* The wife of Richard Hildreth, and an early friend of Mrs. Nichols, who died many years ago of cholera in Naples.

† J. B. Ferguson, who came to England with the brothers Davenport, and died some seven years ago in America.

in sharing its opinion—that we are certainly very clever. Now the reputation for cleverness is said to be soothing to human vanity: and is easily earned oftentimes.

One of the wonders of this century is Louise Lateau. I have just been reading the account of a visit paid her, and was struck by the resemblance which her ecstasies bear, in some ways, to the trance condition of mediumship. Indeed, I may add that there is yet a closer resemblance between her and mediums in the humiliating tests which those who approach her for investigation have thought well to inflict; treating the peasant girl as a knave and impostor for daring to present phenomena they could not explain or understand.

To Spiritualists, at least, Louise Lateau should present an object of intense interest; and to mediums in particular her life should be a subject of study and analysis. I should like to give the faintest, briefest sketch of her life, appending suggestions that may offer themselves as I proceed: chiefly noting those defined characteristics which her case presents in common, more or less, with many mediums.

Her early life was as simple as a field flower: not wondrous in any way, only springing into existence apparently without any use: like thousands of other lives for that matter. In 1850, she came into the world—an addition to a family which had a hard struggle for daily bread; and from the day she was able, and probably even before—she worked hard as a little animal or a little peasant, for animals and peasants toil away together and often for like results. Her character was childlike, commonplace, cheerful and religious ever. In 1866 cholera visited Belgium, and where pestilence raged fiercest Louise Lateau went; tending the afflicted (from whom friends and relatives had fled with fear in that dread hour) soothing the dying, and placing the discoloured dead in their coffins. The plague had no horror for her: accident sometimes reveals and brings out whatever of the heroic lies within us. A year latter she fell ill, and after about twelve months of suffering, during the greater part of which time she lay at death's door, she suddenly recovered. Three days after, the first indications of the stigmas appeared in her feet and side, that is on Friday, April 24th, 1868; on that day week blood came again, and she hastened to communicate the matter to her spiritual director, who after calmly listening to her narration told her to say nothing about it. Her development increased rapidly; the next Friday blood flowed abundantly from her hands,

side and feet, and a few weeks afterwards the coronet of bleeding points appeared round her head and she passed into her first ecstasy.

News of her extraordinary condition went abroad, idle and curious crowds gathered to her home, ecclesiastical authorities considered it their duty to investigate; scientific men stepped in, and the martyrdom of Louise Lateau commenced.

At the request of the ecclesiastical authorities aforementioned, Dr. Lefebvre, Professor of Pathology and Therapeutics in the University of Louvain, who had been for fifteen years head of the medical staff of two lunatic asylums, and who had for the same period been engaged in giving lectures on mental diseases, investigated the case. Nervous affections and mental disorders were his speciality. It is worth noting this in connection with the man called in to examine the phenomena; it may possibly have dawned upon the wise ones that these strange manifestations were caused by mental malady somehow; such ideas have entered men's heads before now. Only a few nights ago I was informed that mediums are all lunatics.

Dr. Lefebvre was requested not to shrink from any *test* or *experiment* which the severe exigencies of modern science might demand. He obeyed. With charming frankness the worthy man declares, that previous to his investigation he was under the sway of a professional prejudice which prevailed, that this case was but some religious fraud which the first glance of science would of course be sufficient to unmask.

Yet to guard against self-deception—for even scientific human nature may deceive itself—Dr. Lefebvre was accompanied in his visits, made at all times and without previous notice, by M. Harrión, and by M. Van Kempen, Professor of Anatomy.

The stigmas number nine: and appear on the palm and back of each hand, on the upper and lower surface of each foot, and on the left side; these are permanent and indelible but only bleed on Fridays, usually commencing at one o'clock on Thursday night and ceasing on Friday evening, though sometimes the blood has continued to flow until midnight. No permanent marks remain upon the forehead, and on Fridays only is it possible to recognise the points from which blood escapes; the quantity which flow is about two hundred and fifty grammes, or half a pint liquid measure; at first it was considerably more.

Dr. Lefebvre is of opinion from pathological

considerations as well as from the expression of her face, that Louise suffers severely from this bleeding. At one time he and his colleagues were of opinion that these stigmas if they were not produced by blisters, could be; and that they might be made to bleed copiously and regularly. Powerful blisters were accordingly applied to the girl's hands and feet near the stigmatic marks. But no blood coming in due time, they were torn off, yet not a drop of blood; but the learned men and humane, were not to be disappointed, and so they took rough cloths and rubbed the surface of the blistered skin when blood came at last, ceasing however when the friction ceased.

After this Monseigneur Poncea, Vicar General of Towney, bethought him of the glove-test to which the girl cheerfully submitted; tightly fitting gloves tied with cords and sealed were placed on both hands, and a covering likewise tied and sealed on the left foot; they were daily examined until Friday, when in presence of eight witnesses the seals were broken, the coverings removed, and blood was found as usual flowing profusely. This experiment was repeatedly made by investigators with ever the same result.

But to scientific sceptical scrutiny there is no end. Dr. Lefebvre, with the air of a man who has done a virtuous deed, tells us that during her trance he tested this inoffensive peasant girl's insensibility to pain by pricking her face and hands with a needle; gathering up a fold of the skin and running it through with a large pin, which with diabolical cruelty he worked about in the hole it made; then drove the point of a penknife into the flesh until the blood spurted out; applied liquid ammonia to the interior of her nostrils—one of the most delicate and sensitive membranes of the human body—and finally applied electric currents at full intensity to the inner surface of the arms, and the muscles of the face without however causing her to lose for a second her look of calm contemplation.

English mediums, so far as I know, have not quite come to this, though they have submitted to much that is derogatory to self-respect.

It would be a relief to take some men with your first finger and thumb by the nape of the neck and to lower them gently into Pandemonium. Is Dr. Lefebvre one of these?

Her trance condition, which I shall presently describe, puzzled the doctors for a time, and one among the many explanations given was that it was self-induced. Therefore on separate occasions Dr. Lefebvre and Dr. Goubeyre

sought to engage her attention during the hour at which she usually went into this condition, in order if possible to prevent its occurrence, but in the midst of cheerful conversation Louise became motionless and passed into the ecstasy.

Not satisfied with this, her spiritual adviser, for the purpose of investigation from a theological point, directed her to resist the ecstasy as far as possible, and with childlike obedience she strove to do so. On the first day when this trial was to be made my Lord Bishop of British Columbia came to witness the result. He found Louise at the very common-place occupation of working a sewing-machine; her hands and feet were bleeding; blood lay upon the floor; entering into conversation with her, the Bishop began asking many questions, as Bishops will, but suddenly her body became rigid, her eyes fixed, the ecstasy had begun.

This ecstasy is most impressive; and affords matter for deepest thoughts and reverent. An eye-witness describes her in this state in these words:—"Her body was bent slightly forward; her face turned to the right shoulder was directed upwards, her eyes wide open and full of expression, her attitude suggestive of the most earnest attention. At times her body moved slowly round as if on a pivot, her eyes seeming to follow the process of some invisible procession; tears rolled down her cheeks, occasionally her hands were raised as if in prayer."

But the conclusion is by far its most striking feature. About three o'clock usually she rises in her chair without leaving the sitting posture, then suddenly falls forward, her head lightly touching the ground, apparently without the regular series of muscular efforts. Her body becomes extended to its full length, her arms wide stretched at right angles, her right foot placed over her left. When an investigator moves her arms they are immediately carried back again to their former position when the pressure is withdrawn. At the conclusion of the ecstasy she rises with a bound from her prostrate position, in which she long lay motionless. Her pulse is scarcely perceptible, her breathing grows fainter and fainter; her body becomes cold, her eyes close wearily, the pallor of death and gloom of agony fall upon her white contracted face, a cold sweat mixes with the blood oozing from her forehead, death seems mercifully to have come at last. Suddenly the tide of life flows back, the body warms, the pulse revives, the colour returns, the eyes open and the ecstasy is over.

Occasionally whilst in the trance condition she gives utterances akin to prophecy, and at times brings back a keen remembrance of much she has witnessed whilst the spirit is absent from her body. The scenes of the Passion she declares are slowly enacted before her. In silent sadness the procession of Jews and Apostles and Roman soldiers pass before her, and the figure of Christ, crowned and bleeding.

A phase in this trance condition which will have particular interest to mesmerists is, that whilst remaining insensible to every other voice, she at once recognises and obeys the voice of her spiritual director at the time.

The world has long laughed at the manifestations of this peasant girl of Bois d'Haine and those who hold belief in them. Louise Lateau is spiritually gifted to a high degree, and that is sufficient excuse for the crowd to cry out "thief and impostor." It is all alike from Joan of Arc to Louise Lateau. The world is strong and cruel, and conquers individuals, though it can conquer truth no more than it can rub out the stars from the sky.

What, I wonder, is the purpose of her life?—for all lives have purposes, though we cannot feel or see them oftentimes;—and what, read aright, the deep meaning of those spiritual manifestations occurring through her organization? In an age when faith has become to many but a fiction, and its exercises but a fashionable pastime for dull Sundays, we can but vaguely at best interpret their meaning. But to one and all, the chief traits of her wonderful ecstasy must recall the story of that sublime and divinest tragedy of Calvary: that greatest lesson of self-purification and sacrifice which man's mind can conceive.*

TRICKS AT A SEANCE.

It is well known that when a good physical medium is held hand and foot in private houses and not on his own premises, temporarily materialised hands and heads will sometimes form near him, the matter apparently being taken from and returned to the medium. In experiments which have been honourably tried, when colouring matter has been applied to the forms it has been afterwards found on the mediums, but people who play tricks at spirit circles by attending in the guise of good faith, sometimes obtain the same result, and so apply it as to injure an honest medium, and to gain unworthy popularity for themselves by appealing to the incompetent judgment of the ignorant.

* I am indebted for some of the details I have used, to a little work, *A Visit to Louise Lateau*, by Dr. Gerald Molloy. Burns, Oates & Co., London.—E. W.

Some tricks of this kind were last week played on Mr. Bastian, an American medium, who has just arrived here, and who having been informed that cabinet *séances* have been thoroughly condemned for proselytising purposes in this country, not only because of the harm they do to the medium, but to Spiritualism, not much sympathy will be felt for him for attempting to revive a class of *séances* which our best London mediums have wisely abandoned.

The following narrative appeared in last Friday's *Standard*, from Dr. Forbes Winslow, son of the well-known medical man of that name:—

To the Editor of the Standard.

Sir.—My attention having been drawn to a new light in the spirit world, a certain Mr. Bastian, who has recently arrived in our country, and was astonishing the credulous believers in Spiritualism, I determined to attend one of his *séances*, with a view of gratifying my morbid curiosity by having a few moments' conversation with "departed spirits." The result of my inquiries may, doubtless, interest some of your readers, especially as a belief in this fanaticism has rapidly gained ground in this country in consequence of the necromancy of some American conjurors.

I entered the house last evening as the clock struck eight, and was shown into an upper room with folding doors dividing the bed-room from the sitting-room. In this room were some fourteen or fifteen people of different sexes, Mr. Bastian, the proprietor of this entertainment, being a person of slight but tall appearance. I had not been long in the presence of this varied assembly before I noticed that the chief performer was not unaided. The first part of the *séance* consisted in what is usually called "the dark *séance*," and may be witnessed far better any day at Maskelyne and Cooke's. This may be summed up as guitar and musical box playing in the centre of the spirit circle and moving about. This circle is formed by the spectators joining hands whilst the medium sits in a chair in its centre. The medium, Mr. Bastian, is supposed to clap his hands during the playing of these instruments, in order to persuade the audience that they are occupied, and that the instruments are moved about by a spirit hand. The explanation of this is that the medium, instead of clapping his hands, claps his left hand against his face, thus imitating the sound, and does what he like with his free one.*

An elderly gentleman, evidently of an impetuous nature, disturbed and rather interfered with the progress of the dark *séance* by demanding a light, stating that he had caught the "spirit hand," and doubtless he held that of Bastian, but before a match could be obtained it had slipped away.

This for a moment seemed to interfere with the progress of the *séance* and with the antics of the spirits, "Johnnie Grey" and "Martin." But on the old gentleman withdrawing from the room matters were allowed to proceed. Evidently the confidence of the medium was shaken by this episode, and it was doubtful for some time whether we should have the light *séance*.

Confidence was, however, restored, and the performance continued. All lights were now turned out, with the exception of one small jet, and before long a

* This sentence is a just one. It is absurd to present the clapping of hands to the public as a test.—*Editor of Spiritualist.*

supposed spirit, clad in dress clothes, made its appearance at the door behind the curtains. One of the audience, Mr. Cumberland, apparently pretended to recognise this as the spirit of his departed brother; but on its third appearance smothered it with cochineal by means of a squirt with which he had provided himself, and jumping forward at the same time, he seized the spirit, and after having a severe struggle to drag what proved to be some human being into the room, withdrew, his fingers being nearly dislocated in the contest. One of the confederates turned out the gas, whilst another guarded the door, the black curtain having being torn down in the struggle.

Ultimately, accompanied by Dr. Kolmers and Mr. Cumberland, I insisted in going into the bed-room, but the medium was stated to be very ill in a trance. He had, however, time to take off his disguise, but not to efface all the cochineal from his face. I found him in a state of feigned trance, without the slightest indication of any reality in it whatever.

Certain confusion and consternation now ensued, and, declaring my identity, I pronounced the whole thing as an imposture from beginning to end.

The charge for this entertainment is five shillings; the address 2, Vernon Place, Bloomsbury Square; the time, eight o'clock on Mondays and Wednesdays. I am not aware on what Spiritualists base their belief, but if it is on the tricks of conjurors the sooner they give up such rubbish the better for their own benefit. I left the room with, however, a determination to expose what I had just witnessed, and I trust that others will follow my example.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

L. S. FORBES WINSLOW, D.C.L., Oxon.

23, Cavendish Square, August 26th.

Next day the following letter appeared:—

To the Editor of the Standard.

Sir,—Being the “elderly gentleman” referred to in Dr. Winslow’s letter in *The Standard* of this day as present at the so-called Spiritualistic *séance*, I can confirm all he states as to the absurdity and gross imposition of the whole affair.

As, however, the Doctor has failed to give an account in detail of the “episode” to which he alludes, and which, as he states, so nearly “shook the confidence of the medium” as to stop for a time the manifestations, perhaps you will allow me to supplement his letter by a few lines.

During the dark *séance* I distinctly heard a movement close to me, and, putting out my hands, grasped what proved to be the hand of the medium, in which was a guitar. Holding fast to the hand, a struggle ensued, during which I called for a light, but by the time this was produced he had managed to escape, leaving the guitar in my hand.

After this episode the medium stated it was essential for the proper production of the desired effects that the conditions of the *séance* should be maintained. On asking what these were, he stated that we should retain hold of each others’ hands. When I asked if this was essential for the spirits to appear, he replied “Yes, that they would not appear without.” On my stating that my hand was free nearly all the time, he had nothing to say.

Dr. Winslow forgets to state that on the gas being turned out the medium and his confederates, of whom there were at least half a dozen present, whose faces were quite familiar to those who have before seen these exhibitions, commenced to sing a hymn, the nature of which in such an assembly, and for such a purpose, was simply blasphemous, or at least indecent.

Now, is there no law by which the police can interfere to put down such exhibitions? They are a disgrace to a civilised city, and have for their ends not only the immediate obtaining of money, but getting into their hands weak-minded people who are led into such places as dupes.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

August 27.

DELTA.

A critical examination of both these letters shows that the grasping of a materialised hand and the transference of colouring matter are in no way inconsistent with genuine manifestations, but that the assumed good faith of some of the sitters had no foundation. In the squirting of colouring matter, they were in the moral position of men at a hotel dinner table, who empty the soup tureen over the landlord because they are too ignorant to know a good dinner from a bad one.

Mediums with good powers should not admit such persons to their *séances* at all. They can get engagements among respectable people, without vulgarising magnificent phenomena by admitting anybody who chooses to attend.

THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION AT SWANSEA.

Last Monday Mr. Laurence Oliphant, formerly a member of the community of Mr. Thomas Lake Harris, in America, read a paper before the Geographical Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, on “Recent Travels in Trans-Jordanic Palestine.” In the course of his narrative he told how he had discovered a temple dedicated to Job; at the end of it was a pillar of stone, against which, according to tradition, Job once scratched himself, somewhat after the manner of certain of the Scotch Highlanders. He had travelled through the unexplored region with but one attendant, and trusted to the hospitality of the Arabs. Mr. Oliphant described some cities and dwelling places, excavated underground, which he had explored to a greater or lesser extent, and he trusted that the Palestine Exploration Committee would soon do the same good work to the East of the Valley of the Jordan, which they had already done to the West. The country was fertile, and admirably suited for cultivation under some settled form of Government. He almost intimated that the Jews were the right people to colonise it, yet, they seem to us to be a people who excel more in finance than in agriculture. Lieut. General Sir John Henry Lefroy, C.B., presided during the reading of the paper.

On the tenth of September Miss Ella Dietz will take a benefit at the Margate Theatre, and will appear as Galatea in the play of Pygmalion and Galatea.

THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF PROFESSOR ZÖLLNER'S EXPERIMENTS.

LIST OF ENGRAVINGS.

FRONTISPIECE :—The room at Leipsic in which most of the Experiments were conducted.

PLATE I :—Experiments with an Endless String.

PLATE II :—Leather Bands Interlinked and Knotted under Professor Zollner's Hands.

PLATE III :—Experiments with an Endless Bladder-band and Wooden Rings.

PLATE IV :—Result of the Experiment.

PLATE V :—Result of the Experiment on an Enlarged Scale.

PLATE VI :—Experiments with Coins in a Secured Box.

PLATE VII :—The Representation of Test Circumstances, under which Slate-writing was obtained.

PLATE VIII :—Slate-writing Extraordinary.

PLATE IX :—Slate-writing in Five Different Languages.

PLATE X :—Details of the Experiment with an Endless band and Wooden Rings.

PREFACES.

Mr. C. C. MASSEY'S PREFACE :—Professor Zollner and his Works—The Value of Testimony considered—Sources of Fallacy—How can Medial Phenomena be Explained?—The Value of Scientific Authority—Mr. A. R. Wallace's answer to Hume's *Essay on Miracles*—Spiritualism an Aggregation of Proven Facts—The Attack upon Henry Slade—Spirit Messages—Slade's

Career after leaving England—Professor Zollner's Polemic—Items relating to the English Translation.

PROFESSOR ZOLLNER'S PREFACE (Dedication of the Work to Mr. William Crookes) :—Workers in a New Field of Research—Thoroughness of the Labours of Mr. Crookes—The Moral Necessity of the Strife about Spiritualism—The Immortality of the Best Works of Human Genius.

CONTENTS.

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CHAPTER II :—Henry Slade's first visit to Leipsic—Professor Fechner's observations of the movements of a Magnetic Needle in proximity to Madame Ruf, a Mesmeric Sensitive—Professor Erdmann's observations of the Phenomenon—The Experiment repeated with Henry Slade—The Observations of Professors Braune, Fechner, Weber and Scheibner—A Spirit Apology—Destruction of a large Screen by Spirits—Experiments with a Compass—Apparition of a Living Hand—Experiments with a Bell and lighted Candles—Slade and the Grand Duke Constantine—Testimony of the Hon. Alexandre Aksakof—A Test Experiment in Slate-writing—Impartation of Permanent Magnetism to an Iron Needle by Medial Power.

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